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SUBJECT: POLICE FORMALLY RECOMMEND INDICTMENT OF FOREIGN
MINISTER LIBERMAN

REF: A. TEL AVIV 01579
[1](#)B. TEL AVIV 01437
[1](#)C. TEL AVIV 01337

[1](#)1. (SBU) Israeli police on August 2 recommended to Attorney General Menachem Mazuz that he indict Foreign Minister Avidgor Liberman on charges of bribery, money laundering, obstruction of justice, fraud, and breach of trust. The recommendation followed an eight-year investigation into Liberman's business activities. Mazuz is expected to make a decision in approximately two months on whether to indict the Yisrael Beitenu leader. Liberman's immediate reaction was to accuse the police of persecuting him, and he suggested there were political motivations behind the investigation. On August 3, however, Liberman told a meeting of his faction that his conscience was clear and that he did not expect an indictment, but that if indicted he would immediately resign from his ministry, and within three to five months he would also resign from the Knesset and from his position as party chairman.

[1](#)2. (SBU) The Israeli press covered the developments closely this weekend, but there was no media frenzy, as the police recommendation was widely expected. Pundits are speculating as to who would take over for Liberman should he resign, but it is largely a guessing game. Liberman's influence over the party is so pervasive that his colleagues are reluctant to speak of a "day after." The assessments we provided in ref cables are still valid, and we will update as events warrant.

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